

Decision Record

Environmental Assessment: WY-050–EA14–01

Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater

Monitoring Wells

BLM Federal Oil and Gas Lease WYW-78561

Section 32, Township 39 North, Range 90 West

**Prepared by
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Lander Field Office
Lander, Wyoming**

This page intentionally
left blank

Table of Contents

1. Environmental Assessment: WY-050–EA14–01	1
1.1. Introduction:	1
1.2. Decision:	1
1.3. Rationale for Decision:	1
1.3.1. Conformance with Resource Management Plan and Land Use Plan(s):	1
1.3.2. National Policy:	2
1.3.3. Agency Statutory Requirements:	2
1.3.4. Relevant Resource and Economic Issues:	2
1.3.5. Application of Measures to Avoid or Minimize Environmental Impacts:	2
1.3.6. Compliance and Monitoring:	2
1.4. Finding of No Significant Impacts:	3
1.5. Opportunity for Public Involvement:	3
1.6. Opportunity for Protest or Appeal:	3
1.7. Authorizing Official:	3

This page intentionally
left blank

Chapter 1. Environmental Assessment: **WY-050–EA14–01**

*Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater
Monitoring Wells*

This page intentionally
left blank

1.1. Introduction:

Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company, L.P. (Burlington) filed a Sundry Notice with Bureau of Land Management, Lander Field Office. The Sundry Notice for the Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells was received on September 10, 2013. The specific proposal is to install seven groundwater monitoring wells on and around the Madden Deep Unit gas well pad located in Section 32, Township 39 North, Range 90 West, on BLM Federal Oil and Gas Lease WYW-78561.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared for the Moneta Divide Natural Gas Project in order to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the expanded natural gas development that was proposed by the operators of the three units. This project was originally proposed as the Gun Barrel, Madden Deep, and Iron Horse Unit (GMI) Natural Gas Project EIS. BLM allows for continued exploration and some development activities on federal surface and minerals as authorized under the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations and 40 CFR 1506.1. An Interim Drilling Plan (IDP) for the GMI Project area was developed according to these Regulations and additional criteria, with the purpose of establishing guidelines for drilling and development within the GMI Project area boundary. This project is located within this boundary and BLM is applying Conditions of Approval to the APD to conform within the scope of the Moneta Divide (GMI) EIS analysis, while also preventing impacts to resources that could limit the range of alternatives within the Moneta Divide Natural Gas EIS.

1.2. Decision:

It is my decision to authorize the Sundry Notice submitted by Burlington for the Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells. The wells are located on BLM Surface on Federal Oil and Gas Lease WYW-78561, and are administered by the BLM Lander Field Office, State of Wyoming. Design Features and procedures are included in the EA and Conditions of Approval (COA).

1.3. Rationale for Decision:

1.3.1. Conformance with Resource Management Plan and Land Use Plan(s):

Current policies for development and land use decisions within this area are contained in the *Lander Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) EIS* (BLM, 1986) and the *Lander Resource Area RMP Record of Decision (ROD)* [BLM, 1987]. The Lander RMP allows for exploration and development of oil and gas subject to Controlled Surface Use Stipulations.

In addition, the Selected Alternative is consistent with the LFO Proposed RMP Final EIS (BLM, 2013), and the pending BLM LFO RMP Revision, which has not currently been authorized or accepted, but is anticipated to be signed in early winter of 2014.

1.3.2. National Policy:

The Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company, L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells Project is a private exploration and development operation of a federal oil and gas lease, which is an integral part of the BLM oil and gas leasing program under the authority of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920, as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended. The United States continues to rely on foreign energy sources. Oil and gas leasing is needed to encourage development of domestic oil and gas reserves to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign energy supplies. The BLM oil and gas program is designed to encourage such development. Therefore, the decision is consistent with national policy.

1.3.3. Agency Statutory Requirements:

The decision is consistent with all federal, state, and county authorizing actions required to implement the Proposed Action. All pertinent statutory requirements applicable to this proposal were considered including informal consultation and formal conferencing with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Cultural survey and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will be completed prior to approval of permits for individual components.

1.3.4. Relevant Resource and Economic Issues:

Potential environmental impacts from the Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company, L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells Project proposal to surface and sub-surface resources identified in the Environmental Assessment are all deemed acceptable with mitigation. The economic benefits derived from the implementation of the Proposed Action in the form of continuing employment opportunities, equipment, services, and potential revenues are considered important.

1.3.5. Application of Measures to Avoid or Minimize Environmental Impacts:

Federal environmental protection laws, such as the Clean Air Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act, apply to all lands and are included as part of the standard oil and gas lease terms and the terms and conditions of the Sundry Notice documents. The adoption of measures identified in Chapter 2.0 of the Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company, L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells EA provides practicable means to avoid or minimize potential environmental impacts. Should conditions warrant, additional measures could be applied to individual permits subject to additional analysis.

1.3.6. Compliance and Monitoring:

Monitoring will be done by the area Natural Resource Specialist and Surface Compliance Technician to ensure compliance with this authorization.

*Chapter 1 Environmental Assessment:
WY-050-EA14-01
National Policy:*

1.4. Finding of No Significant Impacts:

Based upon the analysis contained in the Environmental Assessment for the Burlington Resources Oil and Gas Company, L.P. Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells EA, along with the implementation of the protection measures, I have determined that the Proposed Action will not cause any significant impacts on the human, natural and physical environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required.

1.5. Opportunity for Public Involvement:

Scoping is an important part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and is used to determine the scope of issues related to a Proposed Action (40 CFR 1500.7). The scoping process can involve federal, state and local government agencies, resource specialists, industry representatives, local interest groups and members of the public. Scoping is an interdisciplinary process.

The Sundry Notice for the Madden Deep Unit No. 9 Groundwater Monitoring Wells was received by the Lander Field Office on September 10, 2013. Staff specialists reviewed the proposal and identified impacts and appropriate mitigation measures. It was determined that the nature of the action is routine and that a public notice session would not be necessary. The application was considered technically and administratively complete on November 21, 2013.

1.6. Opportunity for Protest or Appeal:

Under BLM regulations, this decision is subject to administrative review in accordance with 43 CFR 3165. Any request for administrative review of this decision must include information required under 43 CFR 3165.3(b) [State Director Review], including all supporting documentation. Such a request must be filed in writing with the State Director, Bureau of Land Management, PO Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82003, no later than 20 business days after the Decision Record is received or considered to have been received. Any party who is adversely affected by the State Director's decision may appeal that decision to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, as provided in 43 CFR 3165.4.

1.7. Authorizing Official:

Field Manager, Lander Field Office, Richard VanderVoet
Attachment: EA No. WY-050-EA14-01

Date